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AUTHOR Ray, Marilyn
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ABSTRACT

From infancy on the child is surrounded with sex-based role expectations. The school system clarifies and reinforces these images through the male dominated administrative structure, the unbalanced distribution of attention in primary classroom situations, and the mainstreaming of males and females into gender-tagged curriculum programs. Sexism is a major operational principle pervading all facets of the American educational system. Sex-role stereotyping is present in both the social perception of educators themselves and in the instructional materials of which those educators make use. To combat these stereotypic categorizations, texts, readers, and programs such as English and mathematics must be stripped of their sex-based judgmental nuances. Teachers must make a positive effort to develop students' abilities regardless of gender, and physical education programs must be stressed and subsidized in an impartial manner. (LH)

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Sex-role Stereotyping Is Taught In Public Schools

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Don Bonner, Ed. D.
Coordinator, Counselor Education
East Central University
Ada, Oklahoma 74820

Ms. Marilyn Ray
Student
East Central University
Ada, Oklahoma 74820

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SEXISM IN AMERICAN EDUCATION

A and B both live in the same community, actually in the same house with the same identical parents, and go to the same high school. Their parents, of course, pay equal taxes for each of them, and both A and B have about the same good attendance records. After four years, the dean doesn't know either of them by name because they've never been in his office for disciplinary purposes. Question: Do A and B get the same education? Not if A is male and B is female. Their high school education is not separate. But it's not equal either.[1]

Sex-role typing, or stereotyping, is the injustice in the American education system. Sex-typing is the practice of promoting different attributes in boys and girls.[2] Sex-role identity is one of the most important attributes that goes into the concept of self, it is a person's belief about how well his biological and psychological characteristics correspond to his or her concept of the ideal male or female. The definition of the ideal -- the sex role standard -- is influenced by the values of his particular culture.[3]

Society is responsible for sexism. David Tresemer states that the qualities of behavior that are found or thought to be "on the average" for men and women -- i.e., aspects of gender roles -- become dichotomized by association. Biological males are described as aggressive, independent, and so on, females are considered as nonaggressive, dependent creatures. Gender-role typologies (sex-roles) are differences expressed only if

socialization and the social setting allow or encourage what is already present. Social views of men and women have created stereotyped characteristics belonging only to one particular sex.[4] The stereotyped characteristics held by society have led to sexism in American schools.

Sexism begins at birth and continues into the educational process. Every child is color-coded at birth. Its name is typed on a pink-for-girl, blue-for-boy card and placed at the head of the hospital bassinet. Babies are wrapped in pink or blue blankets in the nursery lest an observer forget it is a girl or boy, and mistake it for a baby. All children are born equal, but race and sex are checked, and the world begins imprinting on that baby what it wants.... The expectations vary for each race, sex, and social class. Early on they learn what is approved, what is not approved. A little boy is born, you throw it up in the air, catch it. Nobody would throw a little girl baby, she's too fragile. What a difference in the way you handle the babies at the age of one day. Long before they understand the language, they understand the non-verbal communication.[5]

The categorization of human beings into the two sexes, usually in place by two and a half years, is one of the earliest conceptual classifications a child makes.[6] The child's basic sex-role identity is largely the result of a self-categorization as a male/female made early in development. The reality judgment, "I really am and will always be a boy" or "I really am and will always be a girl" are judgments with a regular course of age development.[7]

By the age of five children have picked up society's expectations for being a boy or girl. Meyer Rabban noted that sex differences in free play at the age of five years are well defined and indicate that a

child's play at this age must be interpreted in terms of children of his sex as well as his age. Boys play with hammers. Girls play with dolls. Inevitably, the five-year-olds have been influenced by social pressure.[8]

Girls learn that boys are told what to do, while they are told what not to do. Children learn that of the two sexes one is better. Blue is better than pink. The king in a deck of cards is higher than a queen. "He" comes before "she" in a sentence. Boys don't cry -- girls do. Girls play house, boys build houses.[9] Girls learn quickly that teachers want them to water the plants, never move the chairs.[10]

Sex-typing begins at home during infancy and is continued in the schools. The pervasiveness of sex-typing has undeniably affected children's behavior and influenced what they learned in school, how they behaved in the classroom, and how teachers reacted to them.[11] Much of this sex-role patterning of boys and girls has been deeply rooted by the time children enter school at five years of age. Without making her first move, the teacher sees boys building boats in the block corner, and girls playing house in the doll corner.[12]

Sex-role stereotyping has been one of the few areas of great success accomplished by families and schools.[13] Everett Reimer echoes the school's society-imposed expectations of sex roles:

> Schools in all nations, of all kinds, at all levels, combine four distinct functions: custodial care, social-role selection, indoctrination, and education are usually defined in terms of the development of skills and knowledge...and which makes it such an effective instrument of social control.[14]

Many critics of education feel society is imposing upon the educational system. The insistence that education be the great panacea for social good in this society has been loudly proclaimed in the

sociological literature about the functions of the school. Ivan Illich in Deschooling Society claims schools have been given total control over the lives of our children. The teacher has become a babysitter, a preacher, a therapist. As a custodian or babysitter, the teacher acts as master of ceremonies, moving children through one routine after another. As moralist the teacher indoctrinates children into the mainstream social values and rejects any that do not fall within the norms of society.

The teacher is the central figure in the education system of modern, industrialized society. The teacher is most often viewed as a woman, and she is seen as the one who makes education happen for children, the one who transmits the patterns and values of the mainstream culture. Many images of the teacher are stereotypes that reflect the cultural myths of our society. These myths must be given proper consideration because these half truths shape and define expectations that teachers should behave in specific, predictable, understandable ways. The accepted stereotyping of teachers is directly involved in the sexist attitudes teachers promote (both consciously and unconsciously) on school children.

Margaret Mead in The School in American Culture describes three images of the American school that correlate with three role definitions of the American teacher. The general public mixes bits of all three images to create the stereotyped teacher.

1. The little red schoolhouse image. An experience known to few, this view is held as a part of America's past tradition. Here is the young girl teaching children slightly younger than she is, chaperoned by the entire community. Here she is seen as a guardian of morals and traditions of the community and must reflect the purity and virginity

of her nature in abstinence of lovemaking, passion, or other worldly pleasures. She lies under the careful and judgmental scrutiny of the community fathers and mothers.

2. The historical tradition of the academy image. Dominated by male teachers and students, the academy sought to honor the past of Latin and Greek. The presence of male teachers only was taken to represent a stress on clear, rational, objective thinking. This view is still prevalent in elitist, private schools. The academy fosters images of superiority, control and order among the male sex.

3. The city school, a place for neither the past traditions or the present realities of their parents. This teacher role is generally found among immigrant parents with children in urban schools. To the urban children of poverty, the teacher in the city school represents hopes for the future, but she also symbolizes the rejection of the cultural and familial values and traditions of the children. The teacher is thought successful if he/she separates the child from the family and directs them to an unknown future.

Each of the three images implies a different set of personality qualities and social skills. Each role has a different relationship with parents and the community. Each role stresses a different kind of responsiveness to the changing needs of society. The one unifying tie is the expectation that teachers should be all-giving, nurturant servants of the people.

In being a nurturant servant of the people the woman teacher becomes a stereotype which emphasizes sexism in the classroom. Anna Freud emphasized the conflict between the mother role and the teacher role by saying the teacher's role is not that of a mother-substitute.

Freud continued, "If, as teachers, we play the part of mother we get from the child the reactions which are appropriate for the mother-child relationship -- the demand for exclusive attention and affection, the wish to get rid of all the other children in the classroom." The teacher's role should be free of a strong emotional and sexual bond with children.[15]

With a 97.9% ratio of female teachers in the classroom, the teacher must fight accepting a stereotyped mother-role. It is the feminine voice (the mother) which becomes the first nagging voice of conscience, urging each, boy or girl, to be a success. It is carried on in the early school days by the female teachers and even largely a female voice throughout secondary school.[16] From the first group or school experience, a child is in the care of a female. This fact has important implications on the teacher sex-role in our society. As long as the teacher is a mother replacement, children will continue to expect the female to act as caretaker, server, disciplinarian.[17]

It is difficult for teachers to be non-sexist because of society's stereotyped expectations. The teacher is expected to be "superwoman, mother-earth, mind reader, and soothsayer." The trouble lies in the great contrast between the idealized image and the negative qualities of the teacher's real experience. The womanly qualities of nurturance, receptivity, passivity, and subordination are considered nonprofessional and lacking in maturity and humanity. With the heavy imbalance of female teachers, the elementary school is considered a feminine atmosphere. Little wonder then that male teachers are stereotyped the same as female teachers. Waller, 1932, stated, "It has been said that no woman and no Negro is ever fully admitted to the white man's world. Possibly we should add man teachers to the list of the excluded."[18]

The teacher has been stereotyped as a machine expected to perform exactly as society wishes. Breton, 1970, summed up the teacher role:

> There seems to be very little recognition that a teacher is a human being, and that a teacher has transitional stages, that a teacher is a modern man, and that a teacher is more than just something that goes into a classroom and, like, teaches."[19]

The most important factor in effective non-sexist education is the classroom teacher. The teacher's views toward the roles of men, women, girls and boys has major importance. Sexism may be in the form of verbalized attitudes, in facial-expressions, or in the way a teacher reacts with the two sexes of children. Research by psychologists and sociologists shows that it is difficult to find teachers that treat both sexes of children equally and don't prefer children of the opposite sex.[20]

Jackson and Lahaderne, 1970, discovered clear patterns of sex differences within the classroom. Their data show that the experience of school is clearly very different for boys than for girls. In four sixth-grade classrooms (with 2 male teachers, 2 female teachers) in the same school, boys received more than their share of managerial interchanges (rules, regulations, routines) and prohibitory messages (misbehavior and deviance), while there seemed to be no clear pattern of sex differences in the findings on instructional messages (work-related material). Meyer and Thompson, 1956, Spaulding, 1963, and Brophy and Good, 1970b, all agree. They discovered that boys receive more behavioral criticism in the classrooms and appear to be more aggressive in general. Boys have more interactions of any kind with teachers. When a student is not called on, it is more likely to be a girl. Student-initiated contacts usually favor boys.[21]

Spaulding reveals that a disproportionate number of teachers' negative remarks to girls concerned incorrect answers, a pattern that could only reinforce girls' sense of inferiority. If teacher criticism of girls is less harsh than criticism of boys, as Spaulding indicates, it may be even more difficult for girls to learn to fight back.[22] E. P. Torrence in Rewarding Creative Behavior in Classroom Creativity emphasizes the teacher role's effect on girls. Torrence stated that teachers say they reward creative behavior in boys three times as often as they do the creative behavior of girls. The "message" to girls becomes clear -- be quiet, be good, be conforming; originality, self-assertion, and "center stage" activities are reserved for boys.[23]

Teachers affect student's attitudes by the amount of attention given to each sex. Studies have shown teachers pay more attention to boys both close and far away. Girls received two to three times more attention only when close by. When girls drift out of a teacher's immediate presence they tend to disappear. The independent girl who moves out of the teacher's range andthen encounters problems is not noticed as quickly as if she were a boy. This tells a girl she is not as important as a boy. Dr. Lisa Serbin, psychologist at State University in New York at Binghamton, showed boys get more attention. She asserts that boys receive eight times more detailed instruction from teachers. Boys are taught step-by-step how to solve problems and are both praised and punished more frequently. When a boy threatened another child in the class, Serbin said the teacher intervened 75% of the time, but when a girl threatened another child the teacher intervened only 25% of the time.[24]

It is difficult to say what affect sexism has overall. The teacher's sexist role leaves unanswered questions such as: "What can we tell from

data that says that the teacher smiles at boys twice as often as she smiles at girls?" Is this an indication of boys' greater need for approval and reinforcement, or the teacher's negative feelings toward girls?[25] Minuchin compared 100 middle-class fourth-graders in a "traditional" school and a "modern" school. She found that in the modern school, which had more flexible attitudes about sex roles, girls showed less concern for approval than in the traditional school. Modern school girls also were found to be equally competent to boys in problem solving, in contrast to the traditional school where boys were superior in problem solving.[26]

Lightfoot conducted a study of sex-appropriate roles with two second-grade classes. Children were asked to name a classmate for several status positions and state the reasons for their choices. Among the positions were achievement, leadership, trustworthiness, attractiveness, honesty, etc. The data indicate that children show early socialization into sex-appropriate roles. For example, children were asked who they would choose to be their tutor for schoolwork and who they would like to be leader (president of the class). The responses were:

	CLASSROOM A		CLASSROOM B	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Tutors	9	18	15	12
Leaders	17	10	18	9

The interesting point of the study is that even though both teachers were women, considered the center of classroom power, the majority of choices were given to boys. The males were seen as dominant in a classroom controlled and supervised by a woman. One cannot help but believe children in both classes had already been socialized into the traditional

sex-role patterns of boys as dominant, natural leaders and girls as scholarly, submissive followers.[27]

Sexism is in direct correlation with the teacher/administration role. According to the Racism/Sexism Resource Center in New York City, preschool teachers are 97.9% female, elementary teachers are 84.3% female, and of all public school teachers, 71½% are women. The percentage of men in preschool teaching is only 2.1%,[28] while elementary school principals are 78% male.[29] School administrations are top-heavy with men. Women seldom advance to administrative positions, as witness a national 1.5% estimate of women principals. This tells children that women are to be ruled over by men. School children do not need to be taught the differential status of men and women -- they learn it by simply attending school.[30] From the male/female ratio in the schools they learn that even though women have classroom authority, men are the ultimate authorities. Lightfoot wonders if it seems confusing to children that the woman teacher dominates the classroom world while men (the principal, her husband) control the teacher in the outside world?[31]

Role discrimination exists among so-called administrative positions of Dean of Girls and Girls' Vice Principals. It is unfair to classify these women as real administrators. Rutherford classifies the two positions as tokenism. This tokenism is evident when comparing the job duties of the Boys' Vice Principal and the Girls' Vice Principal. The Boys' Vice Principal assumes responsibility for school administration in absence of the principal, is responsible for school accreditation and other important duties. The Girls' Vice Principal is expected to coordinate such duties as the senior picnic, graduation program and supervision of cheerleaders or clubs. This type of sexism emphasizes to girls the futility of high career aspirations.[32]

Effects of Sexism

One of the most far-reaching effects of sexism is displacement of emotions and values. Children's emotions are not given their place, they are delegated to be hidden away. Little girls can cry, that's acceptable. Little boys don't cry. Boys have been taught to deny their own softness, or at best to hide it in shame. An elementary teacher, commenting on a boy crying in class, displays the typical sexist attitude, "It is embarrassing for the class and the child. Girls can cry. It's expected."[33] Sandra and Daryl Bem discuss non-sexist emotions:

> If sensitivity, emotionality, and warmth are desirable human characteristics, then they are desirable for men as well as for women... If independence, assertiveness, and serious intellectual commitment are desirable human characteristics, then they are desirable for women as well as for men.[34]

Sexism in the schools leads children into traditional adult roles. Schools segregate the sexes into different courses of study, opening doors to some and closing them to others. As this process advances, the serious effects of sex discrimination are felt.[35] C. N. Allen concurs with the discrimination of the sexes: "The social training of the two sexes is, and always has been, different, producing differential selective forces, social molds as adults.[36] The American female is stereotyped into believing that she can arouse a male sexually, experience deep emotion and heal the psychological wounds of those she loves. Male standards emphasize ability to arouse and gratify a love object, independent actions, domination of others and control of strong emotions, especially fear and helplessness. The American male has traditionally been pressured to prove his strength and power; the American female to prove capable of forming a deep relationship satisfying to the partner or child.[37]

Elementary schools reinforce girls' training for obedience, social and emotional dependence, and docility according to Philip W. Jackson in Life in Classrooms.[38] Kagan stated that a feminine atmosphere characterizes primary grade schools. Girls adapt to the feminine characteristics of the school (neatness, conformity, obedience), while boys are more disruptive.[39] No wonder girls like school better than boys -- our schools have been feminized.[40] During early school years children tend to regard schoolwork as a more feminine than masculine activity.

Sex-role stereotyping results in academic underachievement among adolescent girls. Adolescent girls view intellectual striving as a form of aggressive behavior because it involves competition with a peer.[41] Girls are ambivalent about entering into the competitive atmosphere of the classroom; they are less willing than boys to be conspicuous in their behavior and accomplishments; they encounter different teacher expectations.[42] Clarence Moser, 1975, and others have stated that guilt feelings for failures are projected against the female sex or even feelings of anger at having to pay too high a price for success. A boy who fails has his masculinity challenged; a girl who succeeds is made masculine by her success. She is urged by conscience, implanted in childhood, to be a success, to stay ahead of others; but to follow that voice is to damage her femininity.[43] In her early teens a girl may decide a date Saturday night is more important than academic grades. Social pressure on teen-age girls is greater than academic or career pressure.[44]

Even in today's society where girls are being encouraged to pursue any occupation they wish, our schools are channeling girls into sex-typed fields. Counselors in secondary schools guide girls into more feminine occupations, assuming the girls desire marriage more than the girls really

are. Eleanor Maccoby states that at the secondary level passive learning is still rewarded -- intellectual demands are not made on girls. It is expected that girls' education is chiefly a preparation for marriage and child-rearing.[45] Most women do end up as full-time homemakers because of their socialization. These women exemplify the failure of our society to raise girls as unique individuals.[46] Talent, education, ability, interests, motivations: all are irrelevant. In our society, being female uniquely qualifies an individual for domestic work.[47] Consider the words of Alice de Rivera, who won a lawsuit allowing her to attend an all-male high school:

> Aside from being discouraged to study for a career, women are discouraged from preparing for jobs involving anything but secretarial work, beauty care, nursing, cooking, and the fashion industries...This means that if a girl is seeking entrance to a vocational school she is pressured to feel that certain jobs are masculine and others feminine. She is forced to conform to the Board of Education's image of her sex.[48]

The facts support Ms. de Rivera's statement. Nationally, more than half of the females in public vocational-education programs are being trained in home economics and about one-third in office practices.[49]

Another disturbing effect of sexism concerns mental problems. Dr. Melvin Levine, studying pediatric-age mental hospital admissions, voices a concern that sex-role typing causes girls to receive treatment later than boys. He found a ratio of 6-7 boys to 1 girl admitted for mental problems. Boys having problems exhibit violent, noisy outbursts in the classroom, while girls fade into the wall, adopting passive, inconspicuous postures. Because girls have been taught docility and passivity, the average age of girls referred for help was much older than boys, meaning that the girl has a smaller chance of recovery.[50]

Sexism in History

The history textbooks are not as guilty of sexist stereotyping as much as they are guilty of almost totally ignoring the place of women in history. For too long women in history books have been viewed in light of being domestic scenery behind the real actors and real action of national life. Women have been mistreated in the histories of our nation. It is not surprising to find an author dismissing a woman of history with the easy familiarity of a superior, or discussing a woman's appearance instead of her achievements. Woman's nature serves as a catch-all for false assumptions in women's history. Historians should not dwell on women's marital status, sex life or children unless they have a relevance to history.

Of the very few women represented in history books, they cover only one group of women in history. For every Susan B. Anthony and Harriet Tubman in history there were thousands of women much like everyone's grandmother, factory workers, housewives, and saloon keepers who had a part in making the history of our country. A problem that arises with a fuller coverage of women in history is the fact that historians must be careful not to whitewash women's past. Not every woman was a saint. One cannot assume that every woman was either a docile servant or a rebellious feminist. Obviously, some women could and did accept the limitations of their narrowly defined social role. Other women risked ridicule and condemnation in their efforts to broaden the boundaries of the female roles.[51]

English and Sexism

Children in America are taught what was formerly known as the King's English. It is now the common language of man, but not woman. Each child

makes mistakes in the process of learning English, but because of the sexual politics of English, the girl child is corrected more times than a boy. Little girls most probably will refer to everyone and everything with female pronouns. After all, those are the pronouns she hears most frequently when others are talking about her. Children think of themselves as the center of the world, therefore girls think of the rest of the world as "she" and "her." Soon she discovers not everything is female. Most things are not female. Even things where females play an important part, like the entire human race, are referred to as male. The entire human race, 51% women, has been known as "mankind" or "man."

Young girls are told over and over that almost everything is male. Since she is part of the female pronoun group, she is excluded from the human race. She is a non-person. Children cannot grasp the linguistic concept that the specific stands for the general. Girls feel excluded by the language.

Little boys fare better in the language area. Boys are reinforced positively when they refer to almost everything as male. Because of the English pronouns he is correct more often than girls. A male referant is always used whenever sex is questionable, unknown, or even when both sexes are clearly represented in a group.

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) has encouraged writers to type their way around the deficiencies of the language. NCTE suggests rewriting, whenever possible, the male generic pronoun and the use of words like humankind for man. Three major American publishing houses have looked at the language and made changes. McGraw-Hill Book Company Publications, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, and Scott, Foresman and Company, have evaluated the sexist language in their textbooks and set guidelines

for fair treatment of the sexes in their publications. The guidelines discourage use of man-words and encourage the presence of women in titles, examples, and general language. McGraw-Hill offers the following solutions for substitutions for man-words:

MANWORD	SUBSTITUTION
primitive man	humanity, human race, people
man's achievements	human achievements
"If a man drove 50 miles..."	"If a person (or driver)..."
man-made	synthetic, artificial
best man for the job	the best person (candidate)
manpower	human energy, workforce
grow to manhood	grow to adulthood

Another frontier for the language is relabeling jobs so they apply to workers of both sexes. During the last few years person has been the official non-sexist suffix. The U.S. Department of Labor's Manpower Division has renamed occupations to remove sexism. Unfortunately, the division has not renamed itself. Holt, Rinehart and Winston Publishers suggest the following non-sexist job titles:

SEXIST TITLE	NON-SEXIST JOB TITLE
policeman	police officer
fireman	firefighter
workman	worker
repairman	plumber, electrician, etc.
chairman	chairperson or chair
congressman, congresswoman	Member of Congress
insurance man	insurance agent
caveman	cave dweller

A special caution reminds non-sexist title users to avoid using -person coinages to mean woman, as in "Chairman George Smith and Chairperson Louise Brown," or "The salesman and other salespeople in the Western Region..." Remember, men are people too. It seems the sexist problem among the English-speaking population will not be abolished until a new set of pronouns is accepted.[52]

Sexism in Math & Science

Girls are expected to flounder in math and the sciences. This stereotyping starts in preschool where boys and girls are taught numbers and math by women teachers who never resolved their own blocks with the subject. They introduce mathematics never fully expecting the girls to excel. Subliminally girls are told to remove themselves from mathematical territory. By the time they get to junior high and the male teachers that teach math and science, the girls have already given up. If women teachers can't teach math well and be comfortable with it, how can small girls be expected to really learn math?[53]

Math and science are two sections of the high school curriculum that reinforce sex segregation and produce sex discrimination.[54] Through grade school girls are told by teachers that girls aren't supposed to be good at math, and girls are not encouraged by parents to grasp mathematical concepts. Boys are encouraged to take an interest in math and science. Boys, not girls, are given chemistry sets and microscopes for Christmas. Moreover, all children quickly learn that mommy is proud to be a moron when it comes to mathematics and science, whereas daddy knows all about these things.[55] As children move through elementary school, certain subjects such as English come to be regarded as "girls' subjects" while math and science are perceived as "boys' subjects."[56]

Sex discrimination in math and science are reflected in the fact that girls make lower composite scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test and American College Test, and these lower scores limit their placement in prestige colleges and universities.[57] The medical field, which requires early preparation in chemistry, physics and biology, is scarcely represented by women.[58]

Math texts (or spelling, reading, phonics, etc.) indulge in standard textbook stereotyping. These books automatically assume that activities for girls are cooking, sewing and watching, and for women, housewifery in all its forms, identified by the presence of an apron, mop, iron, broom or eggbeater. Math texts in working with numbers, send girls to the store to buy material or food to satisfy their cooking and sewing instincts. Boys use numbers in building treehouses and toys, in occupations, etc. Math texts are notorious for depicting a bewildered girl or woman having a man explain a problem to her. The caption reads: "Susan could not figure out how to... Jim showed her how." At other times the sexism is quite plain when Joe says "I guess girls are just no good in math."

The great tragedy is that children, especially the girls, believe in the wisdom of the textbook. A little girl goes home and tells her mother that she can't be a doctor because her book said so -- all doctors were men and women were only nurses. The misconceptions caused by sexist textbooks could be cleared up by four revisions less tedious than in a reading text. First, adult stereotyping in occupation and family life should be eliminated. Stereotyping in boy-girl activities, values and groupings must be abolished. Third, stereotyping of male-female math competency/incompetency must be reevaluated and changed. Lastly, math texts for schools should include female mathematicians.[59]

Sexism in School Readers

One early source of the messages children receive is their elementary school readers. These readers abound in stereotypes.[60] Dick and Jane and Spot and Puff in our school readers taught us what was expected of female children and adults in the mid-twentieth century.[61] Reader girls are frilly things with pretty faces, smiles, and a passive attitude toward life. Children are named Dick and Jane, there are no minority names. Reader children live in nice houses or apartments and have two parents with a perfect marriage. Few reader children wear glasses, are too short or too tall, too fat or too slim. Boys are involved in active or aggressive play, pranks and work projects. Girls watch the boys' activities and are usually involved in warm, positive emotion stories, the Pollyanna pattern.[62]

In 1970 Women on Words and Images was organized in Princeton, N.J., to study sex-role stereotyping in school readers. They discovered that textbooks were filled with pictures of girls who were afraid and passive, and boys who were fearless and invincible. The fathers were the only breadwinners and mothers were depicted only as housewives. The group examined the contents of 134 readers published by fourteen major publishing houses and created "Dick and Jane as Victims: Sex Stereotyping in Children's Readers". The following statistics cover 134 readers by 14 major publishers with a total of 2,760 stories:

Boy-centered to girl-centered stories.....5:2

Adult male to female main characters 3:1

Male to female biographies.....6:1

Male to female animal stories.....3:1

Male to female folklore or fantasy stories....4:1[63]

Results included the fact that boys are better, more numerous and stronger in school readers. Men/boys are seen in greater numbers than

female characters. In some books girls serve as only minor characters. No series was found to have an equal number of girl/boy stories. Boy-centered stories outnumbered girl-centered stories five to two. Adult male main characters outnumbered adult female characters 3-1. In biographies the male ratio was 6:1. Even the animal kingdom is sexist -- 2-1 in favor of males.[64]

Only in the pages of a reader does a girl weep nonstop morning to night over a broken doll. Only on reader pages do boys remain impassive in great danger. Other natural emotions like anger, joy, compassion, sadness and love barely appear in reading series. Spontaneity and honest expression of emotions is rare, but unfortunate because it reinforces cultural taboos against expressing emotions. The reader presentation of human emotions reduces expressable emotions into stereotypes.[65]

Adult males in readers are jobholders and fathers. Adult females are either jobholders or mothers, rarely both. The entire reader study unearthed only 3 working mothers even though the US Office of Labor says 38% of all working women have children under 18. Reader mothers are driven to work neither because of desire or special skills and talents. The mother works out of necessity.[66] Woman characters are seen almost without exception as mother, housekeeper, nurse, telephone operator and teacher, as well as a few other stereotypic low level occupations. Male characters are seen in six times as many jobs as female characters.[67] Readers ignore the fact that girls need to learn how to earn a living, or that they might <u>like</u> to.[68]

Children get a sense of themselves from the image repetitions in the books they read. Sexist attitudes repeated over and over again in books and the media alter a child's perceptions until stereotypes and myths about

men and women are accepted as reality.[69] Goodwin Watson and Ruth Hartley both found that by the age of eight 90% agreement is found among children of both sexes as to which sex does which job, what kind of person a boy or girl should be and what the role limitations and expectations are.[70] Imagine the long-term effect of illustrations showing girls standing and watching active boys. School readers tell children what is expected of them and give the children a picture of a false world.[71]

As of 1977 three states, California, Iowa and New Jersey, have legislated against sex-biased school supplies. State boards of education in Colorado, Maryland, New Jersey, South Dakota and West Virginia have proposed or passed resolutions against sex-biased materials.[72] Even with new laws the sexist books are on the library bookshelves to stay. Tradition frowns on book burning. Children must be taught to recognize sexism when they read it so their consciousness will be raised by a sexist book, not warped by it.[73]

Why are school readers so stacked in favor of boys? The major reason cited for the imbalance is boys' lack of reading readiness in the primary grades. Boys (so we are told) will only read stories about boys, whereas girls will go along with anything. If girls' stories were not so limp, so limited, downright silly, boys would cease to discriminate between boy and girl stories. There would be only "good" and "bad" stories.[74]

Carrie Carmichael, author of Non-Sexist Childraising, has compiled a list to aid teachers and parents in juding sexism in books. First, look at the copyright date. Public concern over sexist stereotyping has changed books in the last five years. Secondly, look at the cover and illustrations. Are females more passive than males? Look for stereotypes -- are women aproned and housebound, girls quiet and clean, is there a

wicked stepmother? Third, what is the role of women in the story? Do women characters achieve on qualities other than good looks and relationships with men? Fourth, look at the way the characters live. Does the story have a stereotyped two-child, two-white parent family? Fifth, how do the people relate? Do men have all the power while women are supportive and serving? Are children respected? Sixth, consider the effects on the child's self-image. Are the book's ideas limiting for one sex? Is there at least one strong character with which the child can identify? Seventh, who is the writer or artist? Look at his/her qualifications. Are there cultural biases which may be subtly present in the book? Eighth, check out the language. Is the generic use of "man" avoided by using non-sexist language?

When teachers are forced to use sexist textbooks in school there are alternatives. Some preschool teachers change the words while reading. Policeman becomes policeman or policewoman. Another teacher reported changing pictures in readers. Every time a boy is pictured doing something, the class cuts out a picture of a girl and pastes it onto the page. Enterprising parents of minority students can create a book about their family with a camera. Such parents offer to read the book to the child's class.[75]

Sexism in Physical Education

Sexist stereotyping exists in physical education classes throughout our nation. The difference in physical training is very evident. Boys are encouraged in all forms of exercise and out-of-door life, while girls are restricted in physical exercise at an early age. Only a few forms of exercises are considered lady-like. Rough games and violent exercise of all sorts are discouraged.[76]

Physical education classes are traditionally sex-segregated. Girls

have their exercises and boys have theirs. Although the ultimate goal of physical education is to promote physical coordination, young men and women are taught that some exercises and physical activities are "masculine" and others "feminine." This segregation of the sexes enforces the belief that girls are not able or expected to be the physical equals of men in any athletic activity. Girls are normally relegated to the gym for exercise classes while the boys run track and practice ball outdoors. In the winter when both sexes are in the gym, the PE teachers pit boys against girls in games of volleyball, badminton, whiffleball, etc. This results in girls thinking they are not capable of being effective teammates with boys.

Old-fashioned values are responsible for the sexist attitude still prevalent in physical education. Even in our own country, where boys and girls are allowed to go to the same schools and to play together to some extent, the social atmosphere is different from the cradle. Different toys are given them, different occupations and games are taught...Although both sexes are treated alike most of the early years, girls are eventually made aware that proper behavior for girls does not permit them the freedom and mobility that boys are granted.[77]

Girls have been inhibited in the area of physical activity by tradition and custom of dress. Little girls are admonished by parents not to turn cartwheels or climb the monkey bars because "nice little girls don't let their panties show."[78] Isabel Davenport, writing in 1924, advocated freedom of dress and play for girls:

> Girls from infancy shall be given the same standards and habits of freedom in dress and play that boys now enjoy...girls as well as boys must be trained to play with toys which stimulate instead of discourage and deaden mental and physical activity--that from earliest childhood they be trained exactly as boys already are, to play games which by their nature invigorate, develop and socialize.[79]

Physical education has stressed the wrong motivations for young people. Boys have been taught that to fail in making the football team is a disgrace. Girls are failures if they don't make the pompon team. Too much stress has been placed on competition as a part of a team, leaving the individual largely ignored. Double standards exist in regard to physical exercise. Boys' physical education classes stress the development of muscles. In PE boys got into shape. Girls were a shape. The picture has changed very little -- the boys do most of the competing and the girls cheer them on from the sidelines. Physical education programs are sexist when it comes to spending money. Most of the money is spent on equipment and training for boys. This pays off in the fact that more boys receive college athletic scholarships than girls.[80]

Sexism has far-reaching effects on American children. Parents and society begin the sex-role training at birth, and the process proceeds into pre-school and public school, where the teacher becomes the indoctrination agent. This explains why it is so important for teachers to realize unconscious ways they treat boys and girls differently, setting up sexist ideals. Teachers must strive to treat both sexes equally, judging each student on his/her abilities, not on preconceived, traditional sex-roles. School administrations must be infiltrated by more women just as grade schools must be infiltrated by more men teachers to even up the sex-bias.

Children must be taught it is <u>right</u> to express their emotions openly. What's wrong with a boy or man showing his feelings? Nothing. Schools must stop the hypocritical practice of channeling girls into stereotyped occupations. Academic excellence must be stressed for girls as well as physical excellence.

The school curriculum must be updated and changed to reflect pride in the accomplishments of both sexes. History texts must represent women in their true role. A new set of neuter pronouns must be adopted or substitutions made for man words in order for the English language to be non-sexist. All textbooks must reflect the ability of both sexes to perform various tasks. Math programs must be restructured to emphasize to girls that they are capable of understanding math. Teachers must take a special interest in seeing that girls have equal opportunities in the fields of math and science. Women must be encouraged to be proud of their mathematical and scientific abilities. The school readers must be totally reprinted because of sexist illustrations and situations. Physical education must be stressed and subsidized by school boards as much for girls as for boys.

When the nation's teachers have been trained to avoid sexism in the classroom, school administrations have been equalized with more women in high positions, children are taught to express their emotions and their individuality to the fullest, and the school curriculum is changed to abolish sexism in texts, American children will have the non-sexist education everyone should have had all along.

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WRIGHT ANGLES

JOEY, WOULD YOU GO OUTSIDE AND SHOVEL THE SNOW, PLEASE?
WHY IS IT ALWAYS ME?
WHY DOESN'T SHARON EVER HAVE TO SHOVEL THE SNOW?
SHOVELING SNOW IS MEN'S WORK. SHARON HELPS ME WITH THE WOMEN'S WORK... WASHING DISHES, LAUNDRY...
BUT THAT'S NOT FAIR TO SHARON!
YOU'RE STEREOTYPING HER! HOW CAN WOMEN EVER ACHIEVE EQUALITY AS LONG AS WE HAVE "WOMEN'S WORK" AND "MEN'S WORK?
HE'S RIGHT, SHARON. GO OUT AND SHOVEL THE SNOW.
JOEY, WASH THE DISHES.
ARE YOU INSANE? THAT'S WOMEN'S WORK!

ADA SUNDAY NEWS COMICS, February 11, 1979

S.F. Sunday Examiner & Chronicle, Sunday Punch, July 22, 1973[2]

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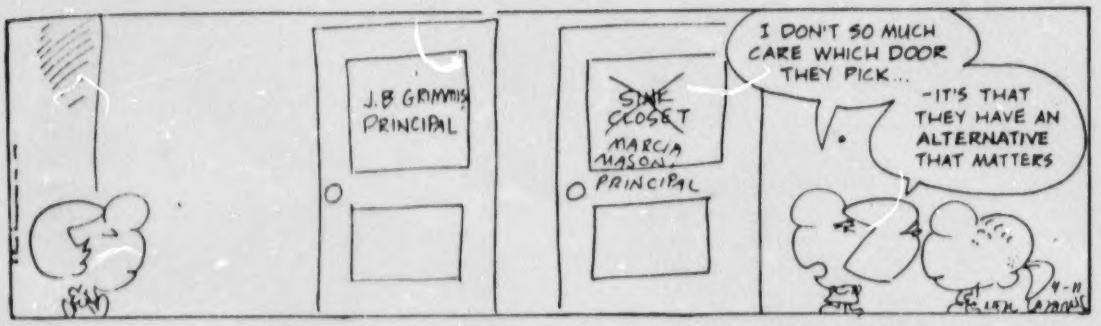
MISS PEACH

By Mell Lazarus


J.B GRIMMIS PRINCIPAL
SINE CLOSET
MARCIA MASON PRINCIPAL
I DON'T SO MUCH CARE WHICH DOOR THEY PICK...
-IT'S THAT THEY HAVE AN ALTERNATIVE THAT MATTERS

The San Francisco Chronicle, April 11, 1973[11]

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